

In the Claims:

1. (Cancel)

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]]7, wherein the testing tests a subnetwork that does not include the user system.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]]7, wherein if the testing fails to produce a result above the criteria, a default multicast protocol is implemented.

4. (Cancel)

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim [[4]]8, wherein the testing component tests a subnetwork that does not include the user system.

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim [[4]]8, wherein if the testing component fails to produce a result above the criteria, a default multicast protocol is implemented.

7. (New) A method for receiving over a public data network a multicast signal at a user system coupled to the public data network, the user system performing the method comprising:

determining if a request to receive the mulitcast signal has occurred;

testing a subnetwork for a first multicasting protocol, if a request to receive the mulitcast signal was determined to have occurred;

implementing the first multicasting protocol, if the result of the test includes a received message indicating the first multicasting protocol is one of a protocol

capable of being used or presently being used and the received message meets a preset criteria;

testing the subnetwork for a subsequent multicasting protocol, if the result of the test for the first multicasting protocol includes one of the received message indicating the first multicasting protocol is not one of a protocol capable of being used or is not presently being used, or the received message fails to meet the preset criteria; and

implementing the subsequent multicasting protocol, if the result of the test for the subsequent multicasting protocol includes a received message indicating the first multicasting protocol is one of a protocol capable of being used or presently being used and the received message meets the preset criteria; and

repeating testing a subnetwork for a subsequent multicasting protocol and implementing the subsequent multicasting protocol, until the result of the test includes a received message indicating the subsequent multicasting protocol is one of a protocol capable of being used or is presently being used and the received message meets the preset criteria.

8. (New) An apparatus for receiving at a public data network a multicast signal coupled to the public data network, the apparatus comprising:

memory (60) for storing a plurality of multicast protocols;

a user interface (58) for allowing a user to request a multicast signal from a source coupled to the public data network; and

a processor (56) for communicating with the public data network, the processor comprising:

a determining component for determining if a request for a multicast join has occurred;

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a testing component for testing a subnetwork for a first multicasting protocol,
if it a request for a mulitcast join was determined to have occurred; and
a mulitcast component for implementing the first multicasting protocol, if the
result of the test includes a received message indicating the first
multicasting protocol is one of a protocol capable of being used or
presently being used and the received message meets a preset criteria;
wherein the testing component tests the subnetwork for a subsequent multicasting
protocol, if the result of the test for the first multicasting protocol includes one of
the received message indicating the first multicasting protocol is not one of a
protocol capable of being used or is not presently being used, or the received
message fails to meet the preset criteria, the processor repeats testing a
subnetwork for a subsequent multicasting protocol and implementing the
subsequent multicasting protocol, until the result of the test is above the criteria.
